

WIGMORE HALL

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JACQUELINE COLE PIANO

Wednesday 29th October at 7.30pm 2003

www.strangepassengerfestivacieszyn.org



Auschwitz Birkenau

Renata Karpinska



The Viktor Ullmann Foundation UK

was founded and established by the British concert pianist Jacqueline Cole in 2002. The purpose of this international and ecumenical inter-faith foundation is to honour, remember and celebrate the artistic lives, courage, visionary integrity and genius of Viktor Ullmann and his contemporaries, whose lives were so tragically and prematurely ended in Auschwitz, October 1944. The focus is performance of their works; holocaust education awareness for the 21st century; the inauguration of the 'Strange Passenger International Music and Arts Festival', Cieszyn, to commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day in Poland April 28 - May 15, 2005 dedicated to all people who suffered in the genocide of the Second World War; and the publication of 'Strange Passenger Review' - the journal of the Viktor Ullmann Foundation.

The aim and witness of the Foundation is not to sanctify these silenced composers, but rather to recognise, and acknowledge their artistry and common humanity. And to bring them, into the awareness, and sphere, of the international musical and artistic community of the 21st century. Theirs is a universal musical language, "and shadowed lesson of the whole world", such music, "as the whole world well understood would afford the understanding"...Sir Thomas Browne: "Religio Medici," 1643. Their voice is as relevant now, in the 21st century, as it was in the early part of the 20th century. The partnership organisations of the Viktor Ullmann Foundation, the Pavel Haas Foundation and the Strange Passenger International Music and Arts Festival, Cieszyn directive, draws all of its inspiration from the profound and glorious music of these remarkable 20th century composers.

"Do you create, or do you destroy?"
 Dag Hammarskjöld

"Just to live is holy"
 Abraham Joshua Heschel

"And should you play the harp to the melodious sun
 and live in word, in wind and delight
 and should you create witnesses in wounded songs, they shall all,
 should we lose you, make peace..."

Verse Poem - Viktor Ullmann - 'On contemplating Schul's coffin' -
 composed in the Theresienstadt ghetto in June 1944. Trans. Michael Haas

Siegmund Schul

Viktor Ullmann - Goethe and Ghetto

"The 'Greats' whom we take as examples, influence the 'habitus' by reaching into the very life-ducts of subsequent generations. And it seems to me that the cultivated European has had his behaviour and thoughts, world-view, language, relationship to life and art, and everything that is work and art, determined by Goethe, regardless of how different the dialectical ideologies may fundamentally be. (The second great influence being the 'antithesis', the 'counter-stream' which comes from Darwin and Nietzsche). For that reason, Goethe's maxim, 'Live in the present, live in Eternity' always seemed to me to reveal the puzzling nature of art. Painting displaces the ephemeral, such as that of the still life with flowers that then wilt, or landscapes that change, the faces of people that grow older, or historical events of the past. Music does the same for the spiritual, for the emotions and passions of people, for the 'libido,' as we in the west say, for Eros and Thanatos. It is from this point that the structure or the composition of a work must then become the conqueror of its substance.

Theresienstadt was and remains for me a school that teaches structure. Previously, where one was unable to experience that weight of cruelty due to 'comfort', (this magic of civilisation), one was allowed simply to disregard it; it was easy to create the beautiful form. Here, where artistic substance has to try and endure its daily structure, where every bit of divine inspiration stands counter to its surroundings, it is here that one finds the master class. It is here that one understands Schiller: 'substance must be consumed by form'. This indeed is presumably the mission of mankind, and not just aesthetic mankind, but ethical mankind as well. I have composed quite a lot of new music here in Theresienstadt, mostly at the request of pianists, singers and conductors for the purpose of the Ghetto's recreation periods. It would be as irksome to count them, as it would be to remark on the fact that in Theresienstadt, it would be impossible to play on a piano if there was none available. In addition, future generations will care little for the lack of music paper that we presently experience. I emphasise only the fact that in my musical work here at Theresienstadt, I have bloomed in musical growth and not felt myself at all inhibited: we did not simply sit and lament on the shores of the rivers of Babylon that our will for culture was not sufficient to our will to exist. And I am convinced that all who have worked in life and art to wrestle content into its unyielding form will say that I was right"
 Viktor Ullmann/Trans. Michael Haas

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)
 Partita No 6, E Minor, BWV830
 Toccata
 Allemande
 Courante
 Air
 Sarabande
 Tempo di Gavotta
 Gigue

John Ireland (1879-1962)
 Sonata in E Minor (1918-1920)
 Allegro Moderato
 Non troppo lento
 Con moto moderato

Interval 20 minutes

Siegmund Schul (1916-1944)
 Fugue (1941 Prague) UK London Premiere

Viktor Ullmann (1898-1944)
 Sonata No 7 (1944 Terezin)
 Allegro
 Alla Marcia, ben misurato
 Adagio, ma con moto
 Scherzo allegretto grazioso
 Variationen und Fuge uber ein hebraisches Volkslied

Fryderyk Chopin (1810-1849)
 Ballad No 1, G Minor, Opus 23

"Every grain of dust has a wonderful soul"
 Joan Miro

Primo Levi (1919-1987)

"One cannot hear the music well from Ka-Be. (Krankenbau - Infirmary). The beating of the big drums and the cymbals reach us continuously and monotonously, but on this weft the musical phrases weave a pattern only intermittently, according to the caprices of the wind. We all look at each other from our beds, because we all feel that this music is infernal. The tunes are few, a dozen, the same ones every day, morning and evening: marches and popular songs dear to every German. They lie engraved on our minds and will be the last thing in Lager that we shall forget: they are the voice of the Lager, the perceptible expression of its geometrical madness, the resolution of others to annihilate us first as men in order to kill us more slowly afterwards. When this music plays we know our comrades, out in the fog, are marching like automatons; their souls are dead and the music drives them, like wind drives dead leaves, and takes the place of their wills. There is no longer any will; every beat of the drum becomes a step, a reflected contraction of exhausted muscles. The Germans have succeeded in this. They are ten thousand and they are a single grey machine; they are exactly determined; they do not think and they do not desire, they walk. At the departure and the return march the SS are never lacking. Who could deny them their right to watch this

choreography of their creation, the dance of dead men, squad after squad, leaving the fog to enter the fog? What more concrete proof of their victory? Even those in Ka-Be recognise this departure and return from work, the hypnosis of the interminable rhythm, which kills thought and deadens pain; they have experienced it themselves and they will experience it again. But one had to escape from the enchantment, to hear the music from outside, as happened in Ka-Be, and as we think back now after the liberation and the rebirth, without obeying it, without enduring it, to understand what it was, for what meditated reason the Germans created this monstrous rite, and why even today, when we happen to remember some of those innocent songs, our blood freezes in our veins and we become aware that to escape from Auschwitz was no small fortune...."

'If this is a Man' - Primo Levi - published by Bodley Head. Reprinted by permission of the Random House Ltd.

Szymon Laks (1901-1983)

"Since for a long time I was a member of the orchestra at Auschwitz I and during a certain period its conductor, I regard it as my obligation to relate and in some way to commemorate this strange chapter in the history of music, a chapter that will probably not be written by any professional historian of this branch of art... however, in spite of my sincerest intentions, I shall not be able to omit entirely those "scenic and idyllic pictures": to write about music in Birkenau... about music in a Nazi concentration camp... one could also say: about music in a distorting mirror... Here is a quote from Victor Frankl's book *Psychologist in a Concentration Camp*: 'Music as well as all other artistic endeavors were too grotesque in the concentration camp; they gave the impression of art only through the ghastly contrast with the background, which consisted of desperate existence.' What conclusion can we reach from this? How was it really? Were or were not music and songs, factors in the 'mental self-defense of prisoners?' (Polish periodical *Przegląd Lekarski*, 1977, no 1) It is difficult to make a judgement in the name of millions of people who passed through the Hitlerite camps, whether they died there or came out with their lives. In the end, the supporters of one theory or the other were either witnesses of a small segment of camp life over a relatively short period of time or they base their opinions on documents left behind by victims. One must also consider that the music played in camps did not have the same effect on everyone. I personally believe that music was simply one of the parts of camp life and that it stupefied the newcomer in the same way as did everything else he encountered in his first days in

the camp and to which he gradually became 'habituated' in time - up to the moment of complete acclimatization and callousness. Music kept up the 'spirit' (or rather the body) of only... the musicians, who did not have to go out to hard labour and could eat a little better. In the same issue of *Przegląd Lekarski* I read another pearl written by a professional musician, Adam Kopycinski, orchestra director in Auschwitz I: 'Thanks to its power and suggestiveness, music strengthened in the camp listeners what was most important - their true nature. Perhaps that is why many certainly tried instinctively to make a certain cut out of this most beautiful of the arts, which precisely there in camp conditions could be, and certainly was, medicine for the sick souls of the prisoners.' It is hard for me to believe that this bombastic claptrap came from the mouth of a professional musician who was a prisoner in a real Hitlerite concentration camp and saw more or less the same things I saw in Birkenau. 'Strengthened their true natures!' 'Medicine for the sick soul!' In reality, the true nature of the prisoner, manifested itself, with very few exceptions, under the influence of hunger, floggings and illnesses; and the medicine for his 'sick soul' was food and real medicines, not music!

Music of another World - Szymon Laks - Published Northwestern University Press. With kind permission of Andre Laks.

SIEGMUND SCHUL (1916-1944)

'Among the composers deported to Terezin, Siegmund Schul represents, along with Karl Reiner and Gideon Klein, the younger generation. In contrast to most of the incarcerated musicians, however, the nature of his participation in the so-called 'Freizeitgestaltung' ('Leisure Activities') and his personal artistic development during the years between the wars remain obscure. The sporadic 'revelations' and remarks provided by H.G. Adler and Jozas Karas hardly lead to significant corrections of what we already know. Another indication of the unsatisfactory nature of the sources available to us is brought out by the fact that until recently there was no photographic portrait or artistic representation of the prematurely deceased musician. More recent research into the life and works of Siegmund Schul draws substance chiefly from the appraisal penned by Viktor Ullmann after Schul's death. This memoir and the poem entitled 'On Contemplating Schul's coffin' belong to a collection of writings newly available again in which Ullmann expresses his views on the 'Leisure Activities'.

In the introductory part Viktor Ullmann writes: 'The composer Siegmund Schul has died in Terezin after a long chronic illness, aged twenty eight years. With him we have lost the sort of talent which is normally referred to as 'of great promise'. The two musicians became acquainted in Prague. Long before their deportation, in 1937 at the latest, Ullmann began to take notice of the young composer and followed his artistic growth with a great deal of personal involvement. Schul's life, and his personal circumstances, were well known to Ullmann through numerous conversations which characterised their friendship. A large number of memories stemming from these talks, has found its way into the 'Memoir' which has in consequence, become our richest and most trustworthy source of information concerning the life and works of Siegmund Schul: Wolfgang Prinz, the co-editor of the Memorial Book of the Jewry of Kassel has also helped uncover details of Schul's life and early years spent in Kassel.

Siegmund Schul was born in Chemnitz (formally Kamenice) on the 11th of January 1916 and spent the first twelve years of his life there. His father, the small businessman Mendel Schul (born 8th of October 1865) was from Głogów in Galicia (Poland). The birthplace of his mother Olga (née Seligmann, born 18th October 1876) is given as Dortmund. The family's arrival in Kassel is registered as 3rd September 1928 for the father and 1st of October for the mother, and son. In the card index, in accordance with contemporary practice, all family members were registered as 'Mosais'. It follows from this that Mendel and Olga Schul were married on the 8th of February in Dortmund. This was Mendel's second marriage; he had four children with his first wife between 1889 and 1895. Mendel managed a business in Chemnitz, which sold cleaning materials and 'manufacturers' seconds'. The business went into receivership one year before the move to Kassel; in 1929 it had been struck off the commercial register. There is documentation available, thanks to an entry in the register of inhabitants, that Mendel Schul had become a citizen of Saxony. This fact, relating to Saxon citizenship, was subsequently entered in the civil register in Kassel. Even though the family no longer resided in Chemnitz, Mendel Schul was officially declared stateless on 30th November. The notion that Schul senior had been unwilling to abandon his particular religious beliefs and convictions which he carried with him from his native Galicia proved very significant for Siegmund's spiritual development: The conflict between the traditional modes of chant in the synagogue and his inclination towards the teaching of the Kabbala, which is well documented for the later part of his sojourn in Prague, can be easily seen in relation to his home education so clearly marked by religious customs of eastern Jewry. The family sought and found a way to liaise with the Jewish community of the city of Kassel.

Over Schul's life, very little is known. He undertook his first music composition lessons in Kassel, Germany, and after leaving Germany in the 1930's for Prague to further his musical training, became a composition student of Fidelio F. Finko, Viktor Ullmann and Alois Haba. Due to the temporary liberalisation in Berlin because of the Olympic Games Siegmund Schul was able to study with Paul Hindemith between 1935 and 1936. Ullmann's statement in his 'Memoir': 'Schul had been the pupil of Hindemith and Haba' has led to more confusion rather than clarification. It becomes evident, however, that this would have entailed Schul's return to Germany after his escape. It has been impossible to establish, either from the students' roll of the Berlin Musikhochschule or from the records held by the police, nor yet from the Hindemith archive that Schul resided in Berlin over a longer period of time. Thanks to recent research in the Prague City archives, this hypothesis has become very implausible indeed. In fact, the whole notion of Schul's study with Hindemith proves to be one of those myths which originated during his reception into Terezin and which is partly the result of incorrect readings of contemporary sources by Ullmann and Adler. Further indications of Schul's presence in Prague can be gained from the date given on an preserved composition 'Those who never were' for Alto voice and piano Op 9b No 1, Prague 27.2.1937, and from the fact that he began his studies at the German Academy of Music in Prague during the winter semester of 1936/37 at the latest. So, as was the case with many other emigrants from the grip of the National Socialist regime, Schul would return to Prague as the place of his exile and to his teachers Alois Haba and Fidelio F. Finko, the latter was the Director of the Academy and who allowed Schul quite a free hand when it came to preparing his diploma work. This made it possible for Schul to complete a string sextet, the conception of which predated his studies and which might subsequently have been premiered at one of the academy concerts. The reviewer of this concert reported in the *Deutsche Zeitung Bohemia* (German Newspaper of Bohemia) of 9th September 1937 'The most advanced composer, one of the Masterclass students, clearly coming from the school of Hindemith, is Siegmund Schul, who with his 'Phantasie for string sextet, presented us with a work of thematic as well as structural independence, a deeply interesting piece'. Apart from the string sextet which made a deep impression on his fellow-students, Schul is believed to have composed a piano sonata at that time (conversation Dr Ingo Schultz and W. Hubner on 16.4.1993) but it is lost, along with the sextet and is somewhat unlikely to have been performed before the establishment of the 'Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia'. Hubner and Schul were both together in the orchestral conductor's class, which was led by Georg Szell to begin with, and, after his appointment to Glasgow in 1937, by Fritz Rieger, the later GMD at Munich. The large somewhat corpulent figure of Schul, who according to his short sightedness, was always bent over the rostrum, did not make the best impression. According to Hubner's report, Szell made the following recommendation to Schul on account of his rather uncoordinated baton-movements: 'You shouldn't be prodding at the orchestra like this, you should be conducting!' (Comments from Hubner's Prague Journal). Nevertheless he attained the required grades even in this subject. The 'Bohemia' reported once again on a successful diploma concert performance on 28th of May 1938. It is quite probable during this period to place Schul's attendance at the composition tutorials of Alois Haba as Schul was very interested in Haba's experimental microtonal compositions, whilst at the same time concerned with writing devotional works for synagogue congregations of Prague. Though just how great Haba's influence was on Schul's creative development as a composer is hard to establish given the paucity of surviving works.

As at Kassel, Schul sought contacts with the Jewish community in Prague. His friendship with Dr Salomon Lieben (of the Lieben-Jeitels'sche Betstube or prayer-room) led to work on a joint musical project. The clear focus and tenacity on Schul's part reminds us strongly how deep the roots of his Jewish faith had become, since his exposure to it in early childhood and youth. A comprehensive collection of chants used in the Old Prague Synagogue was planned. Preliminary work had already started in 1935 and by 1941 some 165 melodies had been written down. Siegmund noted the chants as Dr Lieben sang them to him. Subsequently the chants, in modern notation were presented to Konrad Wallerstein for proofreading. Alois Haba too followed this work with great interest. It was on his advice that Schul discarded the originally-intended 'mathematically exact' indications concerning the melodic micro-intervals and noted down instead the departure from equal tempered semitonal system using the signs + and - respectively. The collection remained unpublished even though Schul worked on it right up to the time of his deportation to Terezin. Two items from the 'Synagogue Chants' have been preserved in Prague.

The years between the completion of his studies at the Academy and his deportation to Terezin offer us only a little information concerning Schul's personal situation or his professional growth. As was the case with all Jewish artists, Schul too was excluded from public cultural life after the creation of the 'Protectorate'. Opportunities for musical activities were soon dependent on one's own initiative; these took the form of numerous private concerts given in the then still-available apartments belonging to musicfans and music-lovers. Schul could make contributions to these programmes from his existing corpus of works. One may legitimately assume that it was within this framework that the now lost works such as the song cycle 'Chants to God' and the above mentioned piano sonata, possibly also the flute sonata as mentioned by Ullmann in his 'Memoir' gained a hearing. The Jewish Cultural Association tried to improve this hopeless situation in which the artists still remaining in Prague found themselves, and organised the so-called 'Umschulungskurse' or courses for re-education. Musicians such as Ullmann and Schul thus found an outlet for musical activity, in which at least to a degree, their skills and experience were acknowledged and useful. They became music teachers of small groups of young people who had been banned from attendance at school or college. These courses for re-education were actually permitted for the purpose of giving Jews who were prepared to emigrate, an easier professional start in the country of reception. Under the cover of this official institution, however, a true underground conservative came into existence. The camouflage did not extend only to the title of the enterprise. The participants had to disguise their occupation. Schul was officially engaged as an 'electro-technician', while Ullmann gave his profession as 'toy-maker'. It was probably in the year 1941 that Schul married the three years older Olga Stern. The young couple had been summoned to leave the apartment which they shared at 15. Galslavská Street and present themselves at an assembly station at the Trade Fair Building. They were put on one of the first deportation transport groups on 30th November, 1941 to Terezin.

It is in one of Ullmann's letters from Terezin that we find evidence showing that apart from forced labour, Schul had been able to occupy himself musically. He continued to compose mostly choral works that draw their themes and inspiration from the Book of Psalms. Ullmann speaks about an 'occasional work' of Schul's which, during the first half of 1943, had been heard in a concert within the framework of the 'Leisure Activities' and which we may assume to have been one of the preserved string duos. The most important, but unfortunately lost, of Schul's compositions from Terezin is the 'Divertimento Ebraico' a string quartet with variations based on a Hebrew folk-song. Schul must have started work on this piece soon after his arrival at the camp as the *Divertimento* was performed for the first time by the Leduc Quartet in 1942. At the end of 1942, Schul suffered a nervous breakdown and contracted tuberculosis, an illness for which there was no medical treatment available in the ghetto. Siegmund Schul died of malnutrition on the 2nd of June 1944 in Theresienstadt. Viktor Ullmann wrote a moving obituary for Siegmund Schul in verse form. The following poignant last words of Viktor Ullmann taken from his 'Memoir' clearly shows that Ullmann, with his usual self-effacement, did not describe his relationship with Schul as a teacher-pupil bond but rather accepted the 18-years-younger composer as a colleague and a mature artist in his own right.

"In the last years he (Siegmund Schul) liked to discuss with me all the problems of the new music, as well as the classical: questions of form and tonality, their re-shaping and breaking up, questions of style, aesthetics, the current view of the world and many details pertaining to some of his works in progress. He made sure I was keeping up to date about every phase in the creation of new works of his, and sought my advice sometimes in the process of creating them whilst playing them to me. I was thus getting a rare insight into the artistic development of this personality whose true calling was music. We have lost in Schul a remarkable and ambitious artistic personality. I am not using the commonplace phrase of an 'In memoriam' when I maintain that he was fully justified in saying, just before he died: "Es ist schade um mich" ("What a pity I've come to this") And it was the truth...." Viktor Ullmann - Memoir.

Frau Olga Stern Schul was deported to Auschwitz on the 10th of October 1944 and survived. After the war, Olga Stern later married Pavel Brandeis, a fellow holocaust survivor whose first wife Friedl Dicker Brandeis, as artist of the Bauhaus period, life long friend of Viktor Ullmann, student of Arnold Schoenberg and Paul Klee and a Carer of the Terezin children (see 'Kinderzeichnungen' - Children's drawings) had been murdered in Auschwitz.

With kind permission of Dr Ingo Schultz, translated by Blanca Bartos Kamp

Siegmund Schul's 'Fugue' is the only surviving fragment for solo piano of his entire compositional output and receives its London UK Premiere in the Wigmore Hall, Wednesday 29th of October at 7.30pm 2003. This work is the third movement of a Piano Sonata, which was completed on the 19th of July 1941 in Prague. The first and second movements are lost. Schul's Fugue is crafted in a similar way, and prefigures, though on a smaller scale, the Fugue ('Par lui a tout le fait') of Olivier Messiaen's 'Vingt Regards sur l'enfant Jésus', which Messiaen composed in Paris between 23 March and the 8th of September 1944. The subject is expansive from the very beginning, assuming an intense movement towards something greater than and beyond its own orbit in space and time. There are also clearly influences of Paul Hindemith, Viktor Ullmann and JS Bach in this 3rd Movement, whose majestic climax reaches for and ends on an affirmation of hope and in the light.

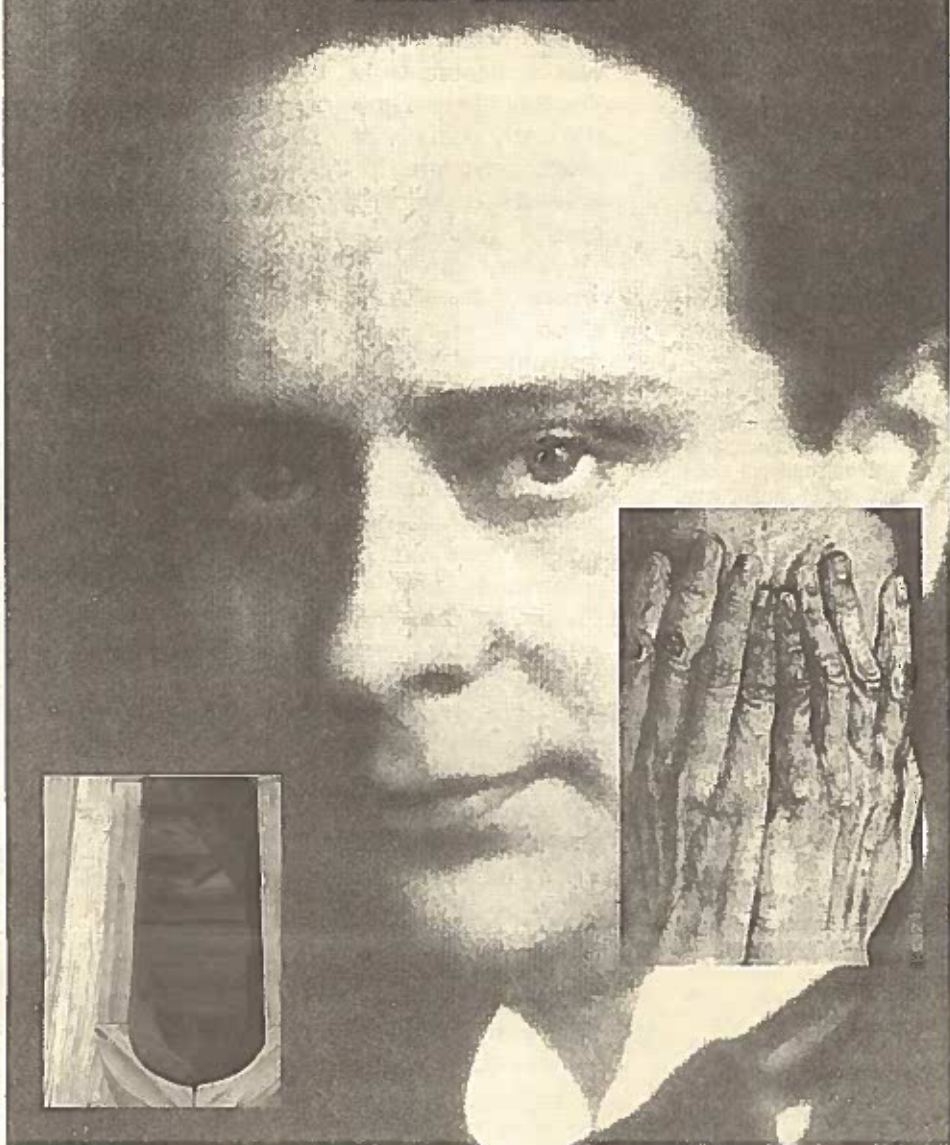
Jacqueline Cole

"To fall, to rise a thousand times and not to sigh..."
Unknown Poet of the Theresienstadt Ghetto

"Now what is music? This question occupied me for hours before I fell asleep last night. Music is a strange thing. I would almost say a miracle. For it stands halfway between thought and phenomenon, between spirit and matter, a sort of nebulous mediator, like and unlike each of the things it mediates - spirit that requires manifestation in time, and matter that can do without space. We do not know what music is..." Heinrich Heine - Neunter Brief: Über die französische Bühne

"Our will to create Art has always been as strong as our will to survive"... Pavel Haas (1899-1944) Terezin.

"Wir suchen vergessner Engelgesang"
"We search for the forgotten song of angels".....
Viktor Ullmann



"Beauty is all about us, but how many people are blind to it! People take little pleasure in the natural and quiet and simple things of life"... Pablo Casals

Viktor Ullmann was born on the 1st of January in Teschen, now Cieszyn Poland, 1898. [Teschen (te'shun), Czech Tesin, Pol. Cieszyn, former principality (c.850 sq mi/2,200 sq km), now divided between Czech Republic and Poland. Teschen was its chief town. A part of Silesia, the principality was under Bohemia from 1292 to 1625, when it came under Hapsburg rule. It remained part of Austria until 1918. Its important coal mines (the Karvina basin) and iron deposits and its strategic concentration of several major rail lines made it an object of dispute between Poland and Czechoslovakia, each of which claimed Teschen on ethnic grounds. After World War 1 the Conference of Ambassadors, a body formed to help implement the Versailles treaty, divided 1920 Teschen, giving the Western section, including the Karvina basin, to Czechoslovakia and the eastern agricultural section to Poland. The town of Teschen also was divided into a Polish section, Cieszyn, and a Czech section, Český Tesin. Poland, however, continued to claim the Czech section and seized it (Oct. 1938) after the Munich Pact. During World War 1, the entire region was annexed to Germany, but in 1945 the status quo as of 1920 was restored despite Polish claims.] An Austrian of Jewish descent and the son of an army officer of the Austrian Imperial Army, posted in Teschen, the Ullmann family moved to Vienna in 1907, where Viktor Ullmann received his education. After military service in World War 1, and studies to be a lawyer like his father Maximilian Ullmann, Viktor Ullmann continued his musical education under the guidance of Arnold Schoenberg who in turn recommended him to Zemlinsky. In 1920 the latter appointed him répétiteur at the German Theatre in Prague. Ullmann subsequently became musical director at Ustí Nad Labem (Aussig) in 1927 but left his post after a year. As a committed and genuine seeker of truth, with the soul of a poet and possessed of a fine intellect - Ullmann was both a Greek and Latin scholar, and as a man of faith, drawn sincerely to the writings of Rudolf Steiner, his artistic life could function well along parallel lines, and his loyalty to the anthroposophical society, led him to take upon himself in trust, the role of bookshop owner of 'Novalis' in Stuttgart (1930-1931). He returned to Prague, because of bankruptcy and after the Nazi acquisition of power, though Steiner's philosophy left an indelible impression upon his first opera 'Der Sturz des Antichrist' (The Fall of the Antichrist-1935) and his subsequent writings, literary and musical. He was also a gifted and spirited music critic who has left a profound legacy of philosophical thought, reflections, observations, concert reviews, letters and verse diaries - 'Der fremde Passagier, Ein Tagebuch in Versen'. (Prague 1938 -1941) "...Was wollen Sie hier?" "Ich bin, zu dienen, Ihr Mitpassagier". "Ich dachte, dass ich der einzige sie!" "Ein kleiner Irrtum, der nun vorbei"..... (Ibsen, Peer Gynt) In the 1930's, like Siegmund Schul, Ullmann studied composition with Alois Haba, who was also a fellow anthroposophist, however Ullmann did not adopt any of the latter's micro-tonal technique. During his lifetime, Viktor Ullmann was never able to get the backing of a music publisher, though he wrote some forty compositions, including three operas, two string quartets, four piano sonatas, various orchestral works and songs for voice and piano. There is also his celebrated 'Five Variations and Double Fugue on a Theme of Arnold Schoenberg' for solo piano, opus 3a 1925/29, (and his opus 3a, reworked into 'Nine Variations and Double Fugue on a Theme of Arnold Schoenberg' 1939) which won for Viktor Ullmann the prestigious composition prize of the Emil Hertzka Foundation in 1936, the same work which he had also very successfully transcribed for string quartet and orchestra. Sadly, some of his other works are lost, for example his opera based on Henrik Ibsen's Peer Gynt; his Symfonia Fantasyzna for orchestra inspired by Felix Braun's 'Tantalos' and a theme of which is later taken up again in Ullmann's opera 'Der Kaiser von Atlantis', and an orchestral work under the guidance of Alois Haba, his 'Symphonische Messe zur Ehren des Erzengels Michael' opus 13, which he completed in 1936. By this time, his relationship with the Anthroposophical Society was in difficulties. Subsequently, Ullmann decided to move on from continuing to engage with such a committed anthroposophical perspective, and was eventually reaccepted into the Catholic Church, in Austria on May 11th 1940. In the years before his deportation to Theresienstadt, (1937-1942) Viktor Ullmann suffered depression, which resulted in his hospitalisation. His suffering was further compounded by the loss of his parents. To add to his bereavements, he was forced to part with his two youngest children, who he never saw again, after they were sent on one of the final Kindertransports to the United Kingdom via Sweden. All this, in an increasingly hostile and dangerous climate, with no real chance for Viktor Ullmann to reach a safe haven, and all possible escape routes made impossible by human indifference and officialdom. This was before he was transported to the Theresienstadt concentration camp on the 8th of September 1942. On arrival he was soon given the task of co organising with the Czech composer Hans Krasa, the so called 'permitted' leisure activities within the ghetto, which had been initiated by the composer Rafael Schaechter (1905-1944), taking an active part in the musical life that flourished, from within the most appalling conditions that prevailed for everyone. He produced works for which he is best remembered - several song cycles, three piano sonatas, a string quartet, the symphonic poem 'Don-Quixote-Dances a Fandango' which was to be the overture to an opera of that name in 1943. He was preparing notes for an opera, based on the life of St. Joan of Arc, and of course there was his masterpiece, the Opera 'Der Kaiser von Atlantis', an extraordinarily insightful, prophetic and enlightened probing parable on the nature of 'transience and mortality', whose profound themes he had been working on since the mid 1920's, but who found his great co creator and librettist for the final realisation of the opera 'Der Kaiser von Atlantis' (The Emperor of Atlantis) in the young genius artist Petr Kien (1919-1944), also incarcerated in Theresienstadt (Terezin). The dress rehearsal performance of 'Der Kaiser von Atlantis' in September 1944, was conducted by Rafael Schaechter. In the performance of one of Ullmann's perhaps finest last works - his celebrated 'Cornet', for Narrator and Piano/Orchestra to words of the poet Rilke composed in the summer of 1944, Rafael Schaechter was the pianist. On the title page Ullmann inscribed a dedication to his third wife, Elizabeth: "For my Elly's birthday, she 'goes along' with the years of this century. 27.9.1944. At the bottom of the manuscript title page is written: Theresienstadt Juli 1944. On the 16th of October, Viktor Ullmann, was sent on one of the final transports to Auschwitz, alongside Petr Kien, Rafael Schaechter, Pavel Haas (1899-1944) and Hans Krasa (1899-1944). It is possible that these five most gifted composers and artists of the 20th century perished alongside one another in a gas chamber on the 17th and 18th of October 1944. Sonata No 7 (Terezin-1944) Ullmann's last work, written on scraps of lined paper, was composed and dedicated to three of his children, Maximilian, Felicia and Johann Marcus, and was completed in the Terezin ghetto on the 22nd of August 1944. This work is here performed for the first time in London's Wigmore Hall. There are five movements whose themes draw their inspiration from Ullmann's most personal references: Allegro: Alla Marcia, ben misurato: Adagio, ma con moto: Allegretto grazioso: Variationen und Fuge über ein hebräisches Volkslied. The last of Ullmann's Sonatas is full of autobiographical musical quotations for example from Gustav Mahler's 'The Song of the Weyfärer', and Richard von Heuberger's 'Der Opernball' - an Operetta that received its premiere in the year of Ullmann's birth. And though it is rumoured that Ullmann was no lover of Operettas, nevertheless, as répétiteur and conducting assistant, to Alexander Zemlinsky, at the German Theatre in Prague, he would have been involved in the preparation of chorus and singers in Zemlinsky's rare production of 'Der Opernball' staged in Prague in October 1923. In the grotesque 'allegretto grazioso', the scherzo and trio of Ullmann's Seventh Sonata, 'Der Opernball' is quoted as if in a dream, but offers no respite even in fleeting distraction, from the grim and violent reality of life in the Terezin ghetto. "Leise ist mir noch Hoffnung spater Wiederkehr"..... "Silently there is still hope (in me) for a late return..." Viktor Ullmann writes at that time. The climax of the sonata is the theme, variations and fugue based on the melody of Yehuda Sharett's Zionist song, composed in Berlin in 1932. Each of the minimalist eight variations weave in and out of Sharett's 'Song of Rachel' which is a setting of a poem by the Russian Jewish poet Rachel, in which she imagines herself as namesake to the Biblical matriarch: "Behold, her blood flows in my blood, her voice sings in mine - Rachel who tends Laban's flock, Rachel, mother of all mothers". Widely sung by the pioneers settling the land of Israel, Ullmann may well have come across this song from members of Zionist youth movements in Terezin. Ullmann also finds the similarity in this melody to the Slovak national anthem 'Lightning is over the Tatra', which was banned by the Nazi's, and the Hussite Hymn - Ye who are God's Warriors, combining them, as with great flair, to appear as an audible illusion of one single song. He quotes J Cruger's Chorale, Nun danket alle Gott (Now thank we all our God) and the name of B-A-C-H and there is even an allusion to Wagner's Tristan and Isolde in the final glorious resolution of Ullmann's epic seventh sonata. The Fugue ends majestically and triumphantly in the key of D major, with greatness and genius of spirit and the best of humanity. Jacqueline Cole Director Viktor Ullmann Foundation

Evree Vás ardešná,
na pšitelaký voštrak.
V tramžerárna 3 VII

1943 19 h.

Vrohlabská kuchyně.

"We cordially invite you to a friendly soiree in the potato peeling room" 1943

" es ist das Ferne nicht beklagenswert, vielmehr das Nahe, dass in ewigen Schatten ruht.... " "one shouldn't mourn the far away, but the one which is close, but in eternal shadow....."



Renata Karpinska

Auschwitz Birkenau

Quotation of the verse - tragedy "Tantalos" of Felix Braun, which Viktor Ullmann set into music as his "Symphonische Phantasie" (the work is lost) and which he also used as a theme in his opera 'Der Kaiser von Atlantis'.

Johann Sebastian Bach

(1685-1750)

The German composer Johann Sebastian Bach was born in Eisenach on the 21st of March 1685 and died in Leipzig on the 28th of July 1750. It is because Viktor Ullmann quotes the letters of JS Bach's surname B-A-C-H in the variations and fugue of the final movement of his epic seventh sonata, that it is therefore fitting to present in this concert one of the most profound works of Johann Sebastian Bach for the keyboard. The Partita No 6 in E Minor BWV830 belongs to the four sets of Clavier-Übung ('Keyboard Practice', 1731-42), which embraces his Harpsichord Partitas, so-called Organ Mass, Italian Concerto and Goldberg Variations and the second volume of the Well Tempered Clavier (c.1742). The first movement entitled Toccata consists of an improvisatory introduction leading to an extended fugue, the subject of which has a similar dialogic to the first three ascending notes of Yehuda Sharett's Zionist Pioneer Folk Song from Berlin composed in 1932! This is followed by a poignant and meditative Allemande, and a wonderfully crafted Italian Courante, whose simple two-voice texture is of a nevertheless grand design with definite first and second subjects. The Air, inscrutable and slight, is followed by the Sarabande, deeply moving and tragic in its intensity and grief. A Tempo di Gavotta, with its cosmic 'lightness' and complex dotted triplets, lifts the sadness of the Sarabande, making way for the austere and extraordinary chorale like Gigue. The prevailing texture is a complicated three-voice counterpoint, with a complex subject of intense expanding chromaticism and weaving in and out of the 'fugal' theme. *Jacqueline Cole*

John Ireland (1879-1962)

Alan Bush: "My studies and Friendship with John Ireland" (1979)

This article was written as part of a John Ireland Centenary Programme broadcast by the B.B.C. in October 1979. It gave a portrait of the British composer John Ireland, of whom Alan Bush said: "I don't think people have any idea of how passionate his music really is - nearly all of it". From 1918 to 1922 I was a student at the Royal Academy of Music. One of my piano professors was Miss Lily West, who had performed some of John Ireland's music in public. I studied his London Pieces composed in 1917-1920, and his Sonata, written composed in Chelsea between 1918-1920. Miss Lily West introduced me to him personally in 1921, when I played his Sonata to him. Subsequently, I played this Sonata in the Wigmore Hall in 1929 and also in Berlin in 1931. I left the Royal Academy of Music in 1922 and started my five years of composition studies with John Ireland in September of that year. John Ireland's methods of teaching composition followed those which he himself had undergone twenty years before as a student of Charles Villiers Stanford at the Royal College of Music. For my first year, I studied the idiom and contrapuntal technique of Palestrina and was introduced to English, Irish and Scottish folk music. I then proceeded to actual composition, and wrote a Fantasy Sonata for Violin and Piano, Op. 3, a String Quartet in A Minor, Op. 4, a Quartet for Piano, Violin, Viola and Cello, Op. 5, songs, a Symphonic Impression for Orchestra, Op. 8, and lastly, a Prelude and Fugue for Piano Op. 9. John Ireland was an exacting teacher. A student of his had to produce work of a consistently high quality, though voluminous quantity was not expected. During my period with him, I was also appearing as a concert pianist. In 1928, I went abroad to study with Artur Schnabel, and entering Berlin University I studied the elements of philosophy and musicology systematically. I returned to Great Britain in 1931 and continued to see John Ireland quite frequently. In 1936, he was invited by the B.B.C. to compose a work to celebrate the accession to the throne of King George VI. As there was little time, he asked me to do the orchestration for him. He would indicate the instrumentation he had in mind. This work I did and he dedicated the piece to me. It is the choral work, These Things Shall Be. In assessing his contribution to musical art in Great Britain, one should remember that except for some compositions by Elgar, such as the Violin Concerto and the first part of The Dream of Gerontius, the general level of professional musical life was poor. Yet in John Ireland's contributions to music are to be found his thirty-nine solo piano works and his sixty-eight songs for voice and piano, which are musical works of such quantity and quality that he was unrivalled in both these genres during the first half of the 20th Century by any British composer and by few of any nationality during this period. In his mature works, the basis is an English melodic style, absorbed during his stay with Stanford. At first he combined this with a harmonic vocabulary, derived either from German chromaticism or from French 20th Century Impressionism; but later his harmony developed in an English idiom, personal to himself, which overcame the eclecticism which colours his earlier mature works".

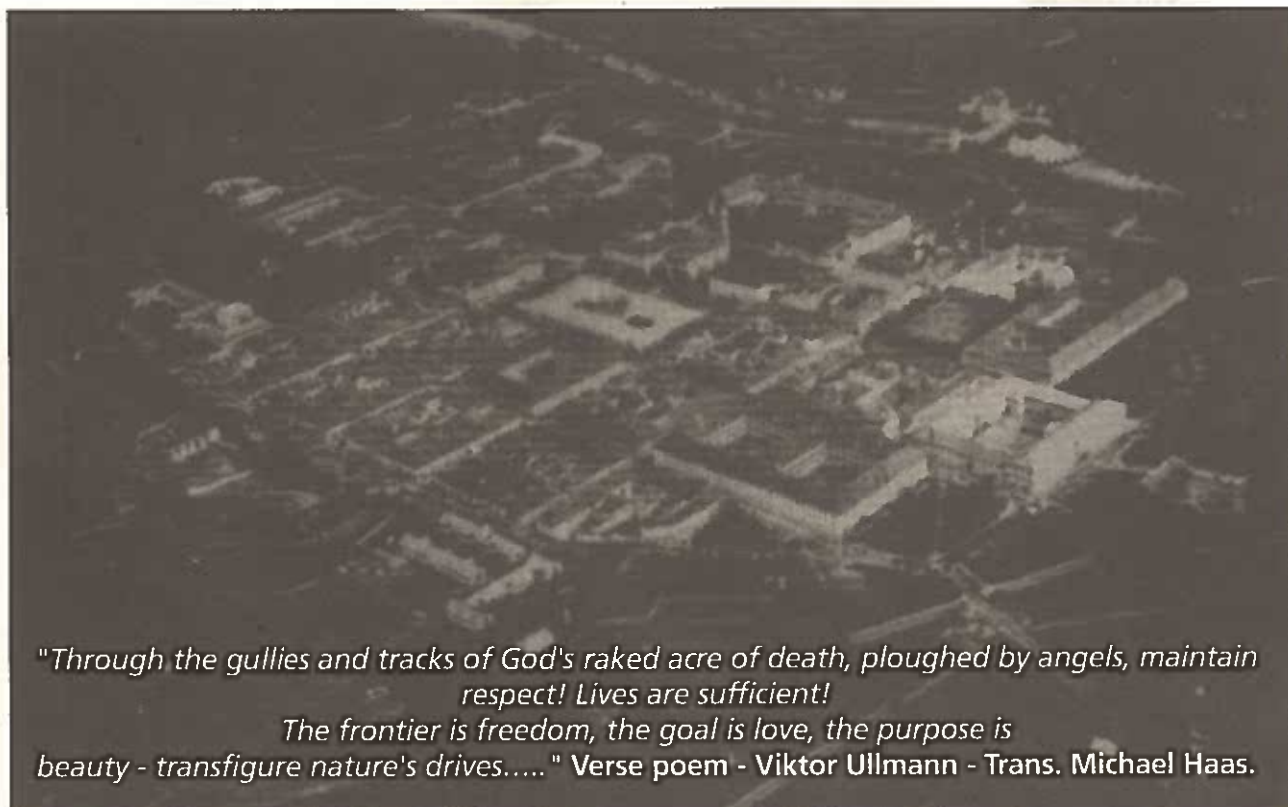
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Fryderyk Chopin (1810-1849)

was born in Zelazowa Wola, near Warsaw, probably on the 1st of March 1810, and died in Paris on the 17th of October 1849. Composed in 1835, Chopin's Ballad No. 1 in G Minor Opus 23 was dedicated to Mr le Baron de Stockhausen. The Ballade as a literary genre reached Poland in the early years of the 19th century. It found its finest advocate in Adam Mickiewicz, one of Poland's foremost poets, whose collection of poems published in 1822, under the title "Ballady i romanse" was the first programmatic work of Polish romanticism. It was Fryderyk Chopin who composed the first purely instrumental ballades. The inspiration probably came from Mickiewicz, Robert Schumann has recorded a passage of a conversation he held with Chopin: "He also... mentioned that the idea for his ballades came from Mickiewicz's poems". This theory appears to be corroborated by the fact the composer's circle of friends referred to the first ballade as "The Polish". Chopin composed his four ballades as a mature artist, during his years in Paris. Their opus numbers bear witness to this: 23, 38, 47, and 52. Liszt, Brahms and Grieg were later to entitle solo piano pieces ballads as did Faure and Frank Martin compositions for piano and orchestra. These are just a few names that might be mentioned in this context. Chopin's Ballads occupy a special place in this oeuvre as a whole, each exemplifying a different idiosyncratic characteristic. In this connection it is worth quoting Schumann again: "I heard a mew ballad by Chopin (that in G Minor). It seems to me to betray more genius than any other of his compositions (even if it is not his greatest work of genius). I told him I liked it better than any of the others. After lengthy reflection he replied emphatically: 'I am pleased, it is also my favourite'" (From a letter to Heinrich Dorn dated 14.9 1836 Korespondencja Fryderyka Chopina, Warszawa 1955, Vol 1, p.420). Finally, attention should be drawn to one intrinsic feature of Chopin's Ballads: their dance-like manner, which derives from 6/4 or 6/8 metre pervading all four works. Often employing archetypes of lyrical, pastoral, dramatic, legendary, phantastic, heroic, wistful and epic themes, which constitute a complete, homogeneous and totally poetic listening experience, which is pure piano soundscape. *Jacqueline Cole*

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"Jacqueline Cole would like to express her heartfelt gratitude to the John Ireland trust and Glive Marks for his invaluable support of the work of the Viktor Ullmann Foundation and Pavel Haas Foundation UK."



"Through the gullies and tracks of God's raked acre of death, ploughed by angels, maintain respect! Lives are sufficient!
The frontier is freedom, the goal is love, the purpose is beauty - transfigure nature's drives....." Verse poem - Viktor Ullmann - Trans. Michael Haas.

Letecký snímek Terezína z předválečné doby